Project-Based Learning to Engage 21st Century Learners

Summary of the Presentation:

What does project-based learning (PBL) look like within a school community? Join the Leadership Team from Apex Community at Decatur Middle School (Indianapolis, IN) as it presents its case for using PBL to engage learners in the technology-rich learning environment of the 21st century. Presenters will cover the basic components of PBL, as well as how to effectively scaffold PBL’s and make them relevant and engaging for students. They also will share examples of materials that Apex teachers have used to plan and implement PBL’s and answer participants’ questions and introduce participants to free tech tools for their own classrooms.

Speakers’ Biographies:

John Hartwyk (Social Studies), Andie Loyal (Science), Jeff Spencer (Mathematics), and Ryan Steuer (English Language Arts) are lead teachers in the Apex Community Leadership Team. They have established a small learning community at Decatur Middle School, which is a large urban school for grades 7 and 8. Through the PBL instructional model, these teachers have created real-life learning opportunities for students, focusing on developing 21st century skills. All four teachers used the wall-to-wall PBL in their classrooms prior to the creation of Apex and now use PBL in a co-taught, interdisciplinary model.

Time of Webcast: 75 minutes

Intended Audience: All educators

Objectives:

- Identify basic components of Project-Based Learning.
- Take away examples of materials that can be used to plan and implement PBL’s.
- Have need to knows answered by the Apex Leadership Team.
- Learn about free tech tools that they can use in their 21st century classroom.

Pre-Questions on the topic:

1. What do you already know about Project-Based Learning (PBL)?
2. Do you require your students to complete projects for the course you teach?
3. What concerns do you have about implementing a PBL in your course?
4. Why do you think that PBLs are receiving so much attention from educators?
Questions to Answer During the Webinar:

1. What were some of the physical changes the school made to implement PBL’s?
2. According to the students, what are some reasons why teachers should use PBL?
3. What are some characteristics of a driving question?
4. What role do students’ questions play in a PBL?
5. Explain the importance of students’ “knows” and “needs to know.”
6. Why should students need to know about giving and receiving feedback?
7. How do teachers integrate 21st Century Thinking Skills into a PBL?
8. How do teachers integrate standards into a PBL?
9. Why should students present their PBL learning to an authentic audience?
10. Why is giving students voice and choice important in a PBL?
11. How do teachers scaffold learning for struggling and high-performing students during the PBL?
12. What are the six basic steps of a PBL?
13. At Apex Community School, do students work on PBLs by themselves or with other students?
14. How do teachers assess students’ learning during a PBL?
15. How is reflection used in a PBL?

Questions for Further Exploration:

1. What is a PBL topic that you might choose to implement?
2. What part of the PBL process would be the easiest for you to implement? The most difficult? Why?
3. What would you need to do to prepare your students for this type of learning experience?
4. How would you manage student behavior during a PBL?
5. Teachers from different subject areas often work together to implement PBL’s. Which colleague at your school might be interested in teaching a PBL with you?

Follow-Up:

- Conduct a Google search to learn more about:
  - the six-step problem-solving process.
  - Michael Gorman and his work with 21st century educational technology and learning at: [http://21centuryedtech.wordpress.com/about](http://21centuryedtech.wordpress.com/about)
  - Project-based Learning for the 21st Century at: [www.bie.org](http://www.bie.org)

Tie to Other KDP Resources:

Articles
Harris, Genell Hooper. “To infinity and Beyond!” *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, Spring 2010.

Video
Conard, N. “Changing the World, One Person at a Time”

Check the KDP website ([www.kdp.org](http://www.kdp.org)) for additional and updated resources.